



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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Two arrested as part of operation in New Orleans East

BATON ROUGE – A multi-agency operation in the New Orleans area has led to two arrests. Cecil Person, 46, of New Orleans, and Floyd Person, 53, of Baton Rouge, were arrested for the illegal disposal of solid waste. If convicted, the Persons face possible imprisonment of not more than one year and a criminal penalty of \$25,000 per violation and/or both. Cecil Person is also charged with Criminal Damage to Property in excess of \$50,000. If convicted, Cecil Person faces possible imprisonment of not less than one year, nor more than ten years and a criminal penalty of \$10,000.

On Dec. 3, DEQ obtained arrest warrants for both suspects. Cecil Person was arrested on Dec. 8 by members of the Louisiana Environmental Crimes Task Force and New Orleans Police Department. Floyd Person surrendered today at a site near Almonaster Avenue in New Orleans.

DEQ investigators determined that the Persons did not have the permits necessary to operate a landfill and were operating without the authorization of the property's owner.

"These arrests, along with the enforcement actions issued during the latest operation in the Almonaster area should serve notice that polluters who commit environmental crimes face harsh penalties," said DEQ Secretary Peggy Hatch. "Working with city officials and the EPA Criminal Investigation Division enhance the efforts to clean up the area while curtailing illegal dumping."

Several agencies worked together to document areas of concern that involved solid waste, hazardous waste, water quality and asbestos issues in a part of New Orleans that has long been a notorious illegal dumping area. To date, more than the teams have conducted more than 85 inspections.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Criminal Investigation Division and Louisiana State Police worked alongside DEQ's Criminal Investigation Division to conduct surveillance of this area. As in previous operations, DEQ brought in staff from across the state to conduct multi-media inspections at these facilities. The city of New Orleans provided police, sanitation, health and code inspectors, and other essential personnel during the event. Deputies from Sheriff Marlin Gusman's office accompanied DEQ's inspectors. DEQ also partnered with the New Orleans Fire Department, New Orleans Revenue Department and the New Orleans and Mosquito and Termite Control Board.

The mission of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality is to protect the environment and public health. Any persons with knowledge of any spills, releases, odors, fish kills, open burning, waste tires and any other types of environmental incidents may contact the department at 225-219-3640 or Toll Free 1-888-763-5424.

An arrest does not constitute guilt in a criminal case and all subjects are presumed innocent. All evidence compiled during the investigation is presented to the area prosecutors who determine if formal charges are warranted.

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